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BALLET GUYED

with a foreword by MARY CLARKE

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

SELDOM has the ballet world been so rent in twain as it has been over *Daphnis and Chloe* (reviewed on the next page by Mary Clarke). It would appear that one must feel passionately about it either for or against. My own opinion is that many people never recovered from the shock of the young men in shirts and trousers and were unable to see beyond the superficial visual aspect (which is a failure) to the choreographic beauty. I can see most of the faults which its detractors painstakingly catalogue and still find that the whole work has an almost overwhelming beauty which speaks straight to my heart. By my fourth visit (in five days) I was prepared to go to the stake for my convictions and by then I felt that already it had its adherents who were prepared to do the same.

COVENT GARDEN AND THE FESTIVAL

Many people have expressed surprise that the Royal Opera House has made apparently so little effort to play an important part in London's Festival activities. It is not my province to speak on the Opera, but Sadler's Wells Ballet finish their season on May 12th when the Festival season is barely under weigh and do not return until July 3rd and then only until July 28th. To be sure they will appear in *The Fairy Queen* of which sixteen performances are to be given, but this is, after all, only a revival and not a special production.

Incidentally, I wonder how many foreign visitors, having previously spent an afternoon or evening in Regent's Park, will, a few weeks later, take their seats at the Royal Opera House only to discover that they are apparently seeing the same thing all over again with different music. Those with an imperfect knowledge both of the English language and the literary scene will probably return to their own countries in the settled conviction that all English

plays are called *The Fairy Queen's Midsummer-Night's Dream*. But how silly of me! It is extremely unlikely that any foreigner will ever see the inside of the Royal Opera House since it is barely possible that he will ever fathom the mystery of the Ordeal by Queue booking system in operation there. Doubtless the Administrators knew this when they made their meagre preparations.

PARTY MANNERS

But since this is Festival Year and, in spite of all obstacles, there will doubtless be some visitors from the provinces and abroad who will be seeing our beautiful Royal Opera House for the first time, perhaps the management would instruct the front of house staff to show a little courtesy to those who pay, and pretty highly, to attend performances. Manners which range from the indifferent to the downright bullying (this last from the uniformed thugs who seem to take their function to be that of chuckers-out rather than doormen) will not leave a very good impression of what is, to all intents and purposes, our only National Theatre.

A NEW BALLET BABY

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. John Field on the birth of the daughter, Dominique, on March 28th.

P.W.M.

LUISILLO, WHO WITH HIS WIFE TERESA AND THEIR COMPANY OF SPANISH DANCERS AND MUSICIANS RECENTLY COMPLETED A SUCCESSFUL SEASON AT THE STOLL THEATRE

Photograph by Duncan Melvin



THE COVENT GARDEN SEASON

Daphnis and Chloe

Frederick Ashton's *Daphnis and Chloe*, first presented at Covent Garden on April 5th, has a great many small things wrong with it but as far as essentials are concerned it seems to me to be a very important and beautiful ballet. In the design of the whole work and in the inspiration of both *solis* and group dances it reveals the hand of a master—a practised hand but not a blasé one, for there is nothing routine about the composition even if the simplicities of a pastoral style have deceived some people into thinking so.

Ashton has wisely refrained from any attempt at reconstructing "Greek dance" and has used instead a simple lyric style of his own, occasionally using motifs from Greek folk dances and thereby keeping the whole work on a timeless plane acceptable to the modern mind yet sufficiently fresh and youthful to suggest in spirit a civilisation younger than our own. In so doing he is entirely in sympathy with the glories of Ravel's score and I suspect that a more lushly sensuous treatment would, to our eyes, have appeared dated and a little self-conscious. John Craxton has succeeded admirably in his decor in assisting Ashton's conception, but in his costumes he has failed to put into execution a basically good idea. The shirts and trousers of the boys cannot be reconciled to the appearance of Pan, his fauns, dryads and nymphs. A costume with some echoes of contemporary dress could be admirable; but Mr. Craxton has produced contemporary dress with hardly a breath of antiquity about it.

The costumes, then, are the major weakness of the ballet. I would like to see them considerably altered, and while revisions are being made perhaps we can dispense with the festive garlands brought on to deck the last scene (and incidentally ruin the appearance of the setting), and with the blocked *pointe* shoes of the Pirate Women. Pan's final exit is deplorable; surely he could melt into the background in a supernatural fashion becoming to a god? And I am not at all sure why Dorkon should turn up and be so welcome at the celebrations after the reunion of *Daphnis and Chloe*. In the face of so much beauty these may be minor objections but they inevitably detract from the ballet as a whole and should be remedied if it is ever to receive the full admiration it deserves.

Ashton has been blessed with wonderful interpretations from the whole company. *Chloe* is a perfect role for Fonteyn; not spectacular in the sense that her classical roles are spectacular, yet pervading the whole ballet and conveying through the dancing the emotions she most beautifully conveys, innocence, fear, and finally the radiance of a deep pure love. Ashton has given her two very expressive *solis* (the one with bound hands before Bryaxis is especially fine) and an exquisite *pas de deux*. Michael Somes (hampered by the worst costume of all) is a worthy partner for her and accomplishes a remarkable feat in performing not only credibly but beautifully the difficult pastoral solo in the first scene. John Field dances excellently as the braggart Dorkon and Violetta Elvin as the seductive Lykanion makes a great effect in a brief, but brilliantly arranged, *pas de deux*. Alexander Grant has tremendous gusto as the Pirate Chief and Alfred Rodrigues is a magnificent Pan. As shepherds, shepherdesses, pirates and pirate women the rest of the company dance with their hearts as well as their bodies and create in the last bacchanale a spirit of wonderful exhilaration.

For me, *Daphnis and Chloe* has been a moving and enduring experience at every performance and for this I am deeply grateful to the whole company and to Ashton, their choreographer, above all.

MARY CLARKE.

The Rest of the Season

IF the Administrators of the Royal Opera House did not know before, they must realise by now that it would have been wiser to give Sadler's Wells Ballet a proper holiday before it embarked on the season just closing. No one could have foreseen Moira Shearer's appendicitis (from which she is now happily completely recovered) or that poor Beryl Grey's illness should have proved more serious than was at first thought. Nor could the epidemic of influenza and the unusually prolonged wretchedness of our English winter have been anticipated; but surely the dancers' exhaustion, both mental and physical, might have been expected and taken into account. Programme arrangers, ballet mistress and ballet master, must often have been at their wits' end. Unfortunately it was the dancers who had to suffer



Photograph by Felix Fonteyn

MARGOT FONTEYN AND MICHAEL SOMES REHEARSING
'LE LAC DES CYGNES' ON THE STAGE OF THE ROYAL
OPERA HOUSE

(quite literally) and the public who had the annoyance of seeing performance after performance (with any cast except the one for which they had booked weeks before) in which the dancers crawled through the motions as though their one idea was to keep upright somehow until the fall of the curtain.

Many of us felt last year that the company never completely recovered from the strain involved by their first visit to America and Canada. This year was even more strenuous and yet no more time was allowed for the recouping of mental and physical energy. I know that American dancers tour in this way year after year but they are not acting at the same time as semi-official ambassadors for a foreign country.

Keeping these circumstances in mind and in view of the very attenuated repertoire presented, a detailed review would not only be redundant but unfair to the dancers, so here are some random reflections which seem to me to summarise the season in general.

I thought the sets for *The Sleeping Beauty* looked battered (I wonder how many others were fascinated by that snapped-off pillar in the last act—it hung like a stalactite from the ceiling and I could scarcely take my eyes off it except during the *grand adagio*)



Photograph by Felix Fonteyn

MARGOT FONTEYN IN 'CINDERELLA'

until I saw those for *Le Lac des Cygnes*. The back cloths looked as if they had been folded up and kept in a suitcase for months. As they will obviously need renewing if Sadler's Wells Ballet wishes to keep its reputation for sumptuous presentation, perhaps it really will be possible to re-design the decor entirely and to take the opportunity at the same time to do some serious thinking about the production side, which now relies entirely on the two principal performers. As for *The Sleeping Beauty*, it is discouraging to find that errors in production have now persisted for five years and look as if they will do so in perpetuity. If this company intends to continue leaning as much as it does at present on the ballets of another era and another nation, then it really should see to it that these ballets are presented with the utmost care in every detail, or even the company's most uncritical admirers will begin to notice that everything is not quite so wonderful as they had supposed it to be.

The Rake's Progress is another current sufferer from decor trouble. The false proscenium has disappeared and the gap is filled with some dusty black curtains. But Alexander Grant and Henry Legerton are giving interesting performances as the Rake, Grant presenting him as more freshly up from the

country than we have been accustomed to. Leger-ton's first two scenes are masterly but he has still to strengthen the second half.

Illness and accident amongst the ballerinas gave opportunities to Nadia Nerina for which she might otherwise have had to wait longer. She responded most gallantly to the unexpected demands of *Cinderella* and *Odette*. Her awakening in the third act of *Cinderella* is the most touching of them all as she strives to separate dream from reality: but in the second act she is still too much the little girl at her first party and not enough the glowing ballerina graciously going through the pretence of being a young girl, and she very understandably cannot yet hide the technical mechanics of that most beautiful and extremely difficult *pas de deux*. Her *Odette* was astonishingly mature technically though here again one is conscious of the technique being applied. But it will be a great pity if she is going to be forced into roles against her personality which is that of a soubrette and a most delightful one. I long for the day when her *Swanilda* will be added to the long line of Sadler's Wells' successes in this role.

What else do I remember with pleasure? Fonteyn in all she did (and I cannot help it if endless praise becomes monotonous), the Fonteyn-Somes *Le Lac*

Photograph by Helga Sharland

NADIA NERINA AS CINDERELLA



des Cygnes—this partnership is altogether a memorable one—the Elvin-Field *Le Lac des Cygnes* which Elvin dances as though it were her birthright as indeed it is, and again her warmth and brilliance in *Ballet Imperial* which had some very ragged performances by the *corps de ballet* who were palpably under-rehearsed. Alexander Grant whose every appearance refutes that extraordinary idea that there is less prestige attached to the character than to the classical dancer (when did Bolm, Massine, Woizikovsky, Shabolevsky ever lack prestige?). Gilbert Vernon advancing steadily towards leading roles. Kenneth Macmillan bravely refusing to be a pale shadow of Helpmann and working out some good comic business of his own in *Cinderella* (but Ray Powell must re-consider his make-up, which repels both sympathy and laughter, before we can pass judgment on his Ugly Sister). Then there was Brian Shaw in *Les Paineurs*. He only needs to add polish to his virtuoso style and to smooth out the musical difficulties of his penultimate entrance and his performance will rank with the never-to-be-forgotten one of Harold Turner.

Altogether the men showed to excellent advantage all through the season, probably because they stood up better to the tour than the girls who, all through the season, went down like ninepins one after another, or several at a time when the crisis was at its worst. For the first time in its history, Sadler's Wells Ballet is in the position of having a male *corps de ballet* containing more potential talent than that of the girls who, at the moment, seem to be at something of a standstill. What is now needed is a repertoire which will display this talent to full advantage. It is a very great pity that the ballets which were taken to America should have given so few opportunities to our young men for, almost without exception, the ballets which do give them a chance are not by English choreographers.

P. W. MANCHESTER.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since writing the review of *Daphnis and Chloe*, the exit of *Pan* which called forth so much criticism has been eliminated.

The London Ballet Circle April 1951

Over 250 people attended the lecture-demonstration on "Elements of Choreography" given by John Cranko at the Circle's meeting on 18th March.

The next meeting will be on 20th May at the Salle Erard, Great Marlborough Street, at 3 p.m. when the speaker will be Beryl Grey (health permitting).

Full particulars of membership from the Secretary: Stanley Hawkins, 132 Kensington Park Road, W.11.

JOURNAL OF A JOURNEY (4)

By FRANKLIN WHITE

ARRIVED in Lafayette, Indiana, at 1 p.m. on December 5th. Two performances at the Music Hall of the Perdue University, December 6th/7th. A rather lovely theatre set near the centre of the large campus. There is nothing new to me in driving along town's main street and stopping a few yards away from the door of my hotel, but when the method of transport is a train, that is very different, and that is exactly what happened on arriving in Lafayette. The enormous twelve-coach train, looking doubly large in comparison with its surroundings, took to the streets like a tramcar and proceeded to the vicinity of the hotel, without causing any fuss or stoppage to the usual activities of cars and pedestrians. Here the cold weather really caught up with us for good; we had cheated winter long enough with stops both between short spells in northern districts, and our company decidedly changed in its appearance turned up for the 12.30 train call after the show on the 7th, bedecked in an amazing array of ear muffs and snow hats, for the 400 mile journey to Detroit. Freezing had set in with a vengeance and so quickly that when loading the scenery that night the locks of the trucks had to be loosened with small charges of dynamite before they could be opened.

Arrived in Detroit, Michigan, 9.30 a.m., December 8th. Three performances at the Masonic Temple, December 8th/10th. This is, I am told, the largest lodge on the continent, having, amongst other things, a cathedral, a concert hall, lecture halls and a public cafeteria in the one building, and many floors both above and below the stage of the section that we were in. I gave up after going down below earth for four floors while exploring one day, and I was still not at the bottom.

Just across the river was Canada and some of us went through the mad business of officially leaving America to see friends on "the other side" for an hour or so. Naturally there was no formality for Americans, who go over the bridge daily, but for us "aliens" it was a very different matter. All of us re-entered the country successfully, but on leaving for Cleveland early on the morning of the 11th, Dorothea Zaymes was not with us, having the night before been whisked into hospital for an appendix operation. This went well for her and a week later she rejoined us for Christmas in Chicago, having recuperated to an extent where she was still useful throughout the

remainder of the tour in the many walking-on parts in the classical ballets.

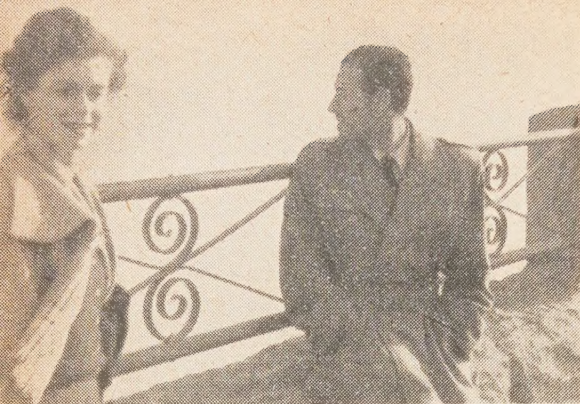
THE LARGEST AUDITORIUM

Arrived in Cleveland, Ohio, at 12.30 p.m. after the trip of 110 miles or so. Two performances at the Public Auditorium, December 12th/13th. This looked the largest of what was by now a good selection of these enormous places. The seating was arranged for our shows to hold about 10,000 people and could have taken more. From the back of this Auditorium the proscenium opening looked postcard size. From the stage one can usually make out the extremities of any theatre, but here one looked into a blank void. Throughout our stay in Cleveland there was a great deal of very pleasant entertainment given by the members of the concert and museum societies,

DOROTHEA ZAYMES RELAXING AFTER A REHEARSAL

Photograph by Franklin White





Photograph by Bryan Ashbridge

JULIA FARRON WITH HER HUSBAND, ALFRED RODRIGUES,
AT NIAGARA FALLS

making this short visit one of the most pleasant of the tour. Also, the management of the production of *The Innocents* with Sylvia Sydney invited the company, as their guests, to the mid-week matinee.

Once more the usual train call after the last show, in the small hours of the morning, for the 260 mile journey to Cincinnati.

Arrived in Cincinnati, Ohio, at 8.15 a.m. Four performances at the Music Hall, December 14th/15th. An old theatre and very cold, but with a nice atmosphere when the curtain was up and a springy stage with a good surface; a joy to dance on. I remember a particularly exciting *Le Lac des Cygnes* with Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes, preceded in the afternoon by a good one with Violetta Elvin and John Field. I think it was here, on the first night, for the one and only time, that we did three one-act ballets divided by both the *Rose Adagio* and the *Aurora Pas de Deux*, a very long programme. On several occasions we have been advertised outside the auditoriums along with the wrestling matches, and while in double-sided auditoriums and connecting theatres there have been a variety of people from the other side watching from our wings, but I did not expect to find the "Terrible Turk" and other tough people of his profession as interested spectators between their bouts in the ring. Perhaps they felt the same about us, as many of us returned the compliment just as soon as we could get out of our costumes between ballets. Two amazingly different worlds housed together and divided only by a wall.

I VISIT A GAMBLING HOUSE

By crossing to Kentucky, over the nearby Ohio river, after the show one night, I cut the number of the forty-eight States that I had not been to to nine and at the same time I visited my first gambling

house, hidden away above the bar of an innocent looking club. There were roulette and crap tables, people examining the validity of the money as they paid for their chips and armed guards standing on stools against the walls watching every move of the games. Needless to say I did not make my fortune, just paid for a very short lived experience!

CHRISTMAS IN CHICAGO

The 1.30 a.m. departure after the last night marked the end of the five weeks during which three days had been our longest duration of performing in any one place. Chicago came next for two weeks, with Christmas and New Year, a comparative rest after the past weeks, and with the knowledge that the back of the tour was broken and behind us.

In the Chicago area especially a railway strike had been affecting all traffic for some time and threatened somewhat to disrupt our journey from Cincinnati, the train having to unload at some siding in the outskirts of the city. Luckily President Truman's announcement of a national emergency put an end to this, but a smooth running journey was not in store. I had been allowed to travel some time in advance of the main body of the company to join my wife, who was then waiting for my arrival in Chicago. Accordingly I boarded a fast train for the three hundred and ninety miles journey right after the show. Everything was fine until snow and engine trouble took a hand in this pleasant arrangement. My train was already late when it left Cincinnati and not long after nothing could persuade its engine to start again after stopping at a station en route. Another one had to be sent for, the

ROWENA JACKSON AND ALEXANDER GRANT ARE
UNDETERRED BY CANADIAN SNOW

Photograph by Bryan Ashbridge



sequence of signals on the one-track lines was missed, and with traffic piling up behind us we were stuck for the moment, and eventually arrived nine hours late, as did the company train. Once I had the frustrating experience of seeing it draw in alongside, while all waiting for signals, and had the horrifying thought that they might even be allowed to go ahead of my train!

How much it meant to settle in a hotel for a fortnight! Cases could be completely unpacked and one could have all one's clothes in a state fit to be worn, two things quite impossible while on the road. Perhaps best of all was having a motionless bed. Then there was the pleasure of being in an opera house again with a good stage and dressing rooms: things that I think we all had learned to appreciate during the last few months. There was a party given at the University on the evening of the company's arrival and another after the once more successful performance of *The Sleeping Beauty* on the first night of that season. It was given by Mr. and Mrs. Fisher (Ruth Page) at a very pleasant club and where Patricia Costello, then playing Bloody Mary in *South Pacific* in Chicago, gave a recital of mainly Latin American singing and dancing. She suggested that one of us should join her in the new dance, the Mamba, and accordingly Ray Powell volunteered and very quickly picked up the somewhat complicated, if exciting rhythm. Later Miss Costello's partner and announcer took Margot Fonteyn in another dance. How lovely she looked in a slim cut green gown as she went through the smooth motions of this dance, contrasting to the fast, hectic motions of the previous number! It was altogether a wonderful party.

Another party was given by the large department store, Marshall Fields. This was for lunch and was a tribute to the company. To make up in some way for what we were missing at this season so associated with our homes in our own country, plum puddings were specially flown over from England for the occasion.

This was the time when people most of all missed their homes and families; after all, Christmas is such a personal affair, but I think it was a good Christmas for everyone from the point of view of parties. The British Consulate was very kind and arranged dinner parties for all those who had not already made plans for Christmas Day and there was a party organised amongst ourselves for the evening. I spent the day with my wife and friends in a small town outside Chicago so I missed the whole affair, including what sounded the most wonderful cabaret arranged by Alfred Rodrigues and performed by some of the company, in which there were delightfully wicked songs and sketches, such as balletic radio advertise-



Photograph by Franklin White

SOME OF THE GIRLS IN THE SLEEPING COACH OF
THEIR TRAIN

ments, changing the word of a popular song to *The Swans that Stayed Behind in Kansas City* and *Poor Chloe*, a skit with apologies to Mr. Ashton. I heard that Anne Negus was quite wonderful as Chloe.

With New Year's Eve came our last Chicago performance. It had been a successful season again and after having packed our make-up boxes we departed through the rowdy streets to one of the many parties going on through the night in various bedrooms in the hotel, nor did a comparatively early train call next morning deter us. My party finished up by invading the room of one astute person who had a kettle and stove and we all settled down to the luxury of sipping tea—my first decent cup in months!

NEW YEAR IN CANADA

The first day of the year brought a good omen; our special train for the first time (and the last too!) was of a luxury streamlined stock with diner and tap car of the same type for good measure. Unfortunately we had this only for the day's trip along the upper, and most beautiful, part of the Mississippi to St. Paul where we changed to sleepers once more for the night's journey to the 49th Parallel and across the prairies of Manitoba. We arrived at Winnipeg at 8 a.m. to give five performances at the Auditorium, January 2nd to 5th.

The last person that I expected to see on leaving the train was an old member of the Wells. I had no

idea that *Brigadoon* had finished or that Paddy Stone had returned home for a while. It was a very pleasant surprise to find him at the station, even at that hour of the morning and in the bitter cold way below zero. Paddy and his parents gave a party for some of us two nights later in their very pleasant home, where Ray Powell and I stayed during our visit. It was so perfect to be in the atmosphere of a home once more, it really brought out just how tired we were getting and longing to have more than just a hotel room.

I must confess that I do not recollect very much about our first performance this time in Canada, or even what ballets we did throughout our stay, although I am pretty sure that at least one of the tour's forty-three *Le Lac de Cygnes* must have been included. With a limited repertoire of twelve ballets of which *The Sleeping Beauty* was performed only in four cities and *Don Quixote* and *The Rake's Progress* being fairly sparsely spread out over the five months, it became hard to distinguish between each performance of the remaining ballets. Thinking back over those four days the thing that comes to my mind is that our host and hostesses of the three parties, Mrs. Hutchinson after the first night, the Stones and the Winnipeg Ballet Society, all knew the cardinal rule to success when giving parties for dancers after the show—feed them before introducing too many guests! It can be hard to enjoy conversation for any length of time immediately after dancing until one is on the way to being refreshed. I found Mrs. Hutchinson's party very pleasant. At the Winnipeg Ballet Society the party was given at the Auditorium, when the public were invited to meet us for the cost of one dollar to aid the Society funds.

A CANADIAN WINTER

Another memory is of hoar frost whitening the eyelashes of Ray Powell, as Paddy Stone, he and I walked home one night, for it was very cold by now—it went down to 30° below zero before we left, and I was told that the station crew loading our scenery had occasionally to dip their hands into buckets of cold water to restore circulation. We had been warned that frost bite was easily got at that time of year and to dress sensibly. We did—even "Daniel Boone" Coonskin caps with a tail still attached appeared along with a large selection of gaily coloured wool shirts and fur lined and collared coats. Fleece-lined boots had long since become a necessary part of our attire. The big January sales helped in the buying of these, the only practical articles to wear there, where they all looked quite normal, but I very much wonder if one could get very far down a London street dressed in them!

Decked in our new costumes we again "emigrated" into America, leaving at 1.30 a.m. right after the last show and starting out on the longest journey of the tour to Boston via Chicago and New York, taking three nights and two days. At 3.30 a.m. on the following morning we picked up three cold individuals who had been waiting for us since 8 p.m. that evening, when we were due at Chicago—Dorothea Zaymes, still recuperating from her operation, Greta Hamby, recovered from chicken pox, and my wife, Joan. At night this move was for the most part done in a complete blackout, until the generators under the coaches unfroze nearing the comparatively mild weather of New York.

(To be concluded)

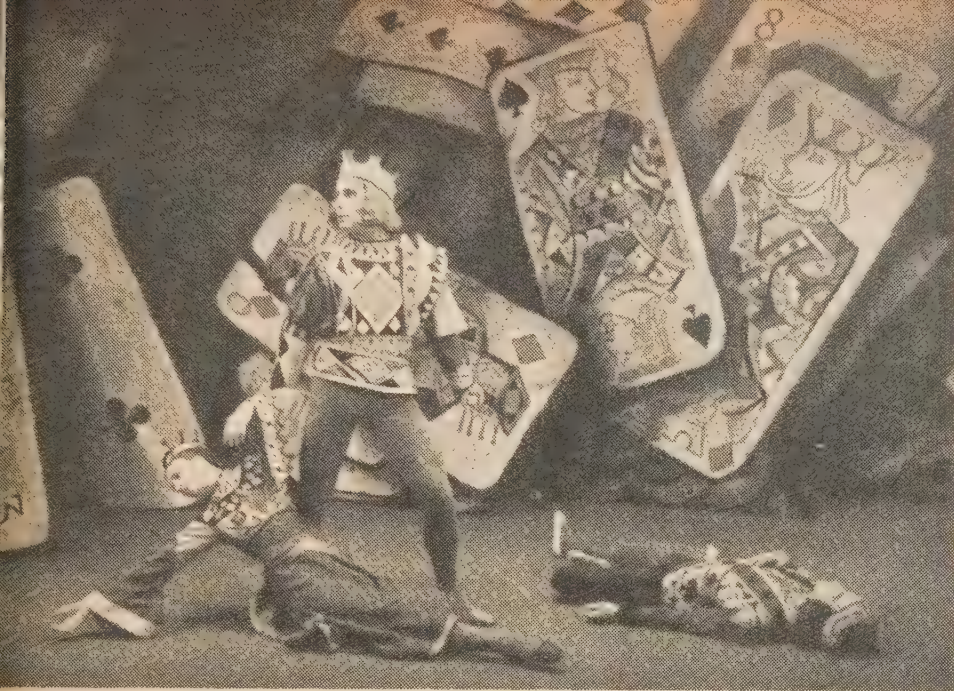
Bouquet of the Month



A joint bouquet this month for Gillian Lynne and Mary Drage for their Leading Swans in *Le Lac des Cygnes*. They have been creating a precedent by actually receiving more applause than that tiresome but sure-fire ovation snatching quartet, the Little Swans.

The International Music Association

The International Music Association of 14 South Audley Street, London, W.1, announce the opening in April of a Club for members with a subscription fee of five guineas for Town members and two guineas for Country and Overseas members. In addition to the Restaurant, Bar, Lounges, Library, Reading Room, Billiards Room and Studios, the premises will also provide a Concert Room. Although the Club is intended primarily for professional musicians and those interested professionally in music, a limited number of non-professional musicians and music-lovers will be permitted to join. Those interested in further particulars should write to the Secretary, Mr. R. A. Cowling.



MARGARET HILL,
DAVID PALTENGHI
AND TUTTE LEMKOW
IN 'SCHERZI DELLA
SORTE'

Photograph by
Churton Fairman

BALLET WORKSHOP'S FOURTH PROGRAMME

By FRANK JACKSON

BALLET Workshop's fourth programme, presented at the Mercury on April 8th, contained two novelties: *Scherzi della Sorte* by David Paltenghi and *Louisa* by a young South African, Mignon Furman.

For the Paltenghi ballet, Leslie Hurry has designed a set of torn playing-cards lying on the floor, which, at one and the same time seemed to enlarge the tiny Mercury stage into boundless space, and yet to emphasise the shut-in, neurotic, over-heated nature of the ballet.

Scherzi della Sorte (why the Italian name?) opens with a sequence between 'The Man' and 'Il Destino' (more pomposity) which is seen, later, to be no more than a dramatic reason for the tearing of the playing cards. Since it has no other connection with what follows, it could either be shortened or cut altogether without harming the work.

What follows is a hectic triangle between Knave, Queen and King, which, though in no way thematically new, makes use of some novel lifts and supported turns and which, by the end, involves the audience, willy-nilly, in a mood of black despair.

Scherzi della Sorte is not the most accomplished

ballet, technically speaking, which we have seen at Ballet Workshop; but, because it has something to say about human relationships, and says it with some force, it seems to me the sort of work which justifies the existence of an experimental ballet organisation.

The same can hardly be said of *Louisa*, a joke with a very small point told at very great length in which characterisation of the most elementary sort was achieved by liberal use of ballet *clichés à la Marseillaise*. The choreographer has a certain talent for comedy which will undoubtedly develop; but it will obviously be some time before she has anything to say which cannot be said within the framework of 'commercial' ballet.

The audience, however, was far from sharing this point of view. Because of the peculiar historical development of ballet in this country, our audiences have grown up with the strangest set of values (which I should like to discuss at length some day). Ballet Workshop, if it is to continue to exist, cannot, of course, ignore audience reactions completely; on the other hand, if it is to fulfil its function, much courage will be needed, and a willingness to go against the stream.



DAVID BLAIR (CENTRE) AND ELAINE FIFIELD (EXTREME RIGHT) IN THE FIRST SCENE OF 'PINEAPPLE POLL'

Photograph by Denis de Marney

PINEAPPLE POLL AT SADLER'S WELLS

By MARY CLARKE

WITHOUT beating about the bush I should like to say that John Cranko's *Pineapple Poll*, first produced at Sadler's Wells Theatre on March 13th, is the best English character ballet to come our way for years. And in its particular genre of comic choreography and sheer infectious gaiety it seems to me to be about the best of its kind in the English repertoire. The debt to Massine is obvious but it is rather in the nature of an existing style mastered and re-exploited than of mere transcription; and the national flavour is so inherent throughout that the Festival of Britain will be hard put to it to produce a more topical, more praiseworthy offering.

The story of the ballet is freely adapted from W. S. Gilbert's Bab Ballad "The Bumboat Woman's Story" and concerns Pineapple Poll, a Bumboat Woman (Elaine Fifield), her unrequited passion for the ladykilling Captain Belaye of H.M.S. Hot Cross Bun (David Blair), and her eventual reconciliation with her faithful lover Jasper, Pot Boy at "The

Steam Packet" (David Poole). As in all his other ballets, Cranko has faced up to getting his story across purely in terms of dancing and gives no synopsis in the programme. It is all the more to his credit that we are never in a moment's doubt as to what is happening and the range of characters that he manages to establish is quite astounding.

The ballet opens in Portsmouth where we find the whole female population swooning right and left at the mere sight of Captain Belaye, a state of affairs which drives their sailor husbands and sweethearts to near-mutiny. We are introduced to Belaye's sugar-sweet fiancée Blanche (Stella Claire) and her doting Aunt Dimple (Sheilah O'Reilly) who is obviously, like Miss Bates, "a great talker upon little matters". The second scene shows the Quayside that evening; Pineapple Poll resolves to disguise herself as a sailor and follow her idol aboard. Poor Jasper comes across her discarded dress and is heartbroken. Scene Three is on board H.M.S. Hot Cross

Bun. A singularly inept bunch of sailors is being drilled by the Captain and reacts in an extraordinary manner to his commands. He is somewhat astounded when one of them faints at the firing of the cannon but as he has to go ashore to get married does not stop to investigate more closely. During his absence we begin to realise what is wrong with the sailors—and Pineapple Poll also realises that every other girl in Portsmouth has had the same idea as she has. When the Captain returns with his Bride the "sailors" pass out *en masse* and only recover in order to declare their undying passions for him, meantime stripping off their outer garments to reveal their identities. The real crew return at this point, led by Jasper in search of his Poll, and are eventually persuaded by their womenfolk to forgive and forget. Jasper is invested with a captain's uniform by the newly promoted Belaye and the glamour of gold braid makes him immediately acceptable to Pineapple Poll. It is left only for Aunt Dimple to set the seal of Britannia upon the proceedings.

This bare outline of the action cannot begin to indicate the wealth of comic choreographic composition. The highspots are the opening dance for sailors and wives; David Blair's hornpipe which is not only brilliant dancing but sheer character pre-

sentation *through* dancing; Fifield's first lovesick solo—beginning with a disconsolate *ronde de jume*, followed by petulant *frappés*; the hilarious *pas de trois* conversation piece between Blair, Claire and O'Reilly; and the final triumphant dance of the sailors. There are occasional repetitions that could be removed and once we have seen through the girls' disguises the action should be tightened considerably. I thought the movements for Poole as Jasper were a little at variance with those for the rest of the company since they are angular and vacillate between dance and mime; perhaps a little more roundness and flow would help their integration. But Poole certainly conveys the character sympathetically enough to compensate for this weakness.

Charles Mackerras has turned an assortment of Sullivan tunes into a deliciously danceable score; it may not be Offenbach but it is every bit as good as Lecoq and ideal for the subject. Osbert Lancaster's settings and costumes top off the whole collaboration to perfection and in him we welcome a new designer with an equal zest for architecture and for fun.

Cranko gets well-nigh perfect interpretation from his cast. Fifield is enchantingly round, feminine and silly, and her personality is at last beginning to blossom and catch up with her technique. David Blair

DAVID POOLE AND ELAINE FIFIELD (CENTRE), WITH SHEILAH O'REILLY, DAVID BLAIR AND STELLA CLAIRE (EXTREME RIGHT) IN THE LAST SCENE OF 'PINEAPPLE POLL'

Photograph by Denis de Marney



dances beautifully and always carries himself as becomes a paragon of elegance, ending every virtuoso passage in bored composure. Within the limits of the role Cranko has given him Poole is excellent. Stella Claire is completely the society nit-wit and Sheila O'Reilly's Aunt Dimple is straight out of Jane Austen. The crew of H.M.S. Hot Cross Bun prove once again that there is something about a sailor in a ballet that is well-nigh irresistible and the girls lend excellent support. All in all, we may chalk up a resounding success and, above all, exult in the fact that at last Cranko has found the *métier* in which he is completely at ease.

The whole programme on March 13th consisted of Cranko ballets and afforded an interesting cross-section of his work. *Sea Change* showed us that he could handle a story in theatrically effective terms; *Pastorale* displays a facility for pure dance invention; *Beauty and the Beast* is the first complete, if miniature, grasp of a balletic whole. In *Pineapple Poll* we have all these gifts brought together in positive fashion for the first time and if anyone tries to tell Mr. Cranko that comedy is less important than tragedy or romantic flapdoodle I implore him to turn a deaf ear and (in the best traditions of the Senior Service) a blind eye.

Photograph by Paul Wilson

STANLEY HOLDEN AS MR. O'REILLY IN 'THE PROSPECT BEFORE US' RECENTLY REVIVED BY SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET



New Ballet School in Bulgaria

The first State Ballet Secondary School was recently opened in Sofia, capital of Bulgaria. Girls and boys are admitted at the age of ten after they have completed their third year at elementary school. A complete dance education is given including special courses on the history of art, the theatre and ballet. The course takes eight years during which time the children are given practical experience by appearing at the National Opera Theatre in child roles and dances.

The School also has arranged a special five year course for older children who have already had some professional training.

The pupils who graduate from the school will be considered to have had a full secondary school education and will receive the title of 'Artist of the Ballet'.

This new development in Bulgaria is yet another instance of the growing world-wide interest in Ballet.

Ram Gopal

Ram Gopal with his company of Indian dancers and musicians is undertaking an extensive tour of the English provinces, following his return visit to the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, beginning May 7th. Here is the itinerary for May and June:—

May 21st, for one week, Theatre Royal, Norwich; May 28th, for one week, Pavilion, Torquay; June 4th, for one week, Festival Theatre, Malvern; June 11th, for one week, Theatre Royal, Bath; June 18th, for one week, Opera House, Cheltenham.

His company has been increased by two new dancers, a veena player and a flautist from India.

The photograph by Bryan Ashbridge on the cover is of Violetta Elvin and Michael Somes in the first scene of 'Daphnis and Chloe'

TWO NEW MASTERWORKS

BALANCHINE'S *LA VALSE* AND TUDOR'S *LADY OF THE CAMELLIAS* DISTINGUISH
NEW YORK CITY BALLET'S SEASON

By ARTHUR TODD

TWO superb new ballets, by two of the world's greatest choreographers in their own respective fields, highlighted the remaining weeks of the New York City Ballet's recent season. These were George Balanchine's *La Valse*, his best new ballet of the last few seasons, and Antony Tudor's *Lady of the Camellias*, which is far and away the finest work Mr. Tudor has given us in the past five years. As if these two new works were not riches enough, this season also included the first appearances of Nora Kaye, America's greatest dramatic ballerina, with the New York City Ballet. Also, there was André Eglevsky, who joined the company for a number of guest appearances.

Balanchine's *La Valse*, which is built on Ravel's *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* and concludes with *La Valse*, is a major work of art in every respect. Choreographically, dramatically and visually *La Valse* is a stunning ballet. Though it does not have a definite plot, it does have a strong dramatic impetus. It builds steadily through a series of waltzes for ever-expanding groups of dancers until its culmination, when Francisco Moncion, as Death, dresses Tanaquil Le Clercq in black jewels, gloves and a gown and leaves her dead in the midst of a funeral group. This conclusion, which is inherent in the choreography from the very start, is also foreshadowed by the crystal-lit decor that is intermingled with black crepe festoons.

Choreographically, *La Valse* may well mark the beginning of a major new phase in Balanchine's career. Indeed, it is a marked departure from this choreographer's oft-termed "Petipa style" and, as such, has not pleased those who expect Mr. Balanchine to keep repeating himself in the same vein. Here we see bodily movement and design that are eloquently communicative rather than being merely decorative and theatrically exciting. These elements are especially noticeable in the early waltz danced by Vida Brown, Edwina Fontaine and Jillana, where the distorted arm movements and greater use of the torso might almost be termed anti-balletic since they extend so much further than purely academic ballet movement. This is movement of great creative power and, as handled by Mr. Balanchine, it is developed in the ensuing scenes. It shows up

especially in the great variation of arm movements—twining, weaving and interlocking—and it is also apparent in the over-all designs created throughout the balance of the ballet.

The mood and sweep of *La Valse* are difficult to re-create in words. Suffice it to say, this work finds Balanchine at the peak of his powers as a choreographer and he has been given magnificent assistance by Karinska, who designed for it quite the loveliest costumes of her career. Moreover, it is danced superbly by its principals—Tanaquil Le Clercq, Nicholas Magallanes, Diana Adams, Herbert Bliss, Francisco Moncion, Yvonne Mounsey, Michael Maule, Vida Brown, Edwina Fontaine and Jillana—and by the entire corps. Diana Adams, a ballerina who seems born to dance beautifully in Balanchine as well as Tudor ballets, was especially outstanding, her musicality and lyricism being particularly notable in the first role that Balanchine has created for her

Photograph by Walter E. Owen

TANAQUIL LE CLERCQ AND NICHOLAS MAGALLANES IN
'LA VALSE'



since she joined the company. Herbert Bliss, who has been dancing better than ever this season, also distinguished himself and Tanaquil Le Clercq, Nicholas Magallanes and Francisco Moncion also gave notable performances. A capacity first night audience shouted their approval of *La Valse* and there were numerous curtain calls for the cast and Mr. Balanchine.

A similarly enthusiastic welcome was accorded Antony Tudor's *Lady of the Camellias*, premiered later in the season. Based on the novel by Alexandre Dumas, *Fils*, Tudor utilised a score by Guiseppe Verdi, consisting of music assembled from little known and, in some instances, unpublished works. The original costumes and scenery, designed by Cecil Beaton for John Taras' *Camille* for Markova and Dolin, were loaned through the courtesy of Ballet Associates. Diana Adams and Hugh Laing had the central roles of Marguerite and Armand and what magnificent performances these have been, with both dancers acquitting themselves superbly.

As choreographer, Tudor has perfectly caught the mood and spirit of the Nineteenth Century. With the exception of Marguerite, Armand and his father, all of the other characters are, wisely enough, secondary, and serve admirably as background and contrast to the central roles. Perhaps the most magnificent dance section is the *pas de deux* for Marguerite and Armand in the country idyll

Photograph by Walter E. Owen

HUGH LAING IN 'THE PRODIGAL SON'



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scene. Here Tudor has captured the essence of the purely romantic ballet and fused it with evocative movements of great emotional power, as only he can. Similarly, he has composed a tragically moving *pas de deux* and death scene for Marguerite in the final scene of the ballet. Tudor, who usually works slowly in composing a new work, completed this ballet in less than a month. Nevertheless, it has all the hall-marks and characteristics of this great choreographer—well defined characterisation, inventive movement and eloquent emotional communicativeness. The most distinguished audience of the entire season, which included Greta Garbo, Maurice Evans, Cecil Beaton and the newly engaged Nora Kaye and Jerome Robbins, gave Diana Adams, Hugh Laing and Antony Tudor a deserved ovation and the tumult continued until the stars and the choreographer had taken fourteen curtains. This great new work would be an asset to any company and, as such, further balances and enriches the repertoire of the New York City Ballet. Unquestionably, it will have a dominant position in the repertoire for countless seasons to come.

Aside from his great personal success in *Lady of the Camellias*, Hugh Laing has been growing in his other roles in the repertoire and now finally seems at home in his relatively new surroundings. In *The Prodigal Son* and *Illuminations*, particularly, he has completely realised the characterisations of these oddly disparate roles and made them completely his own, illuminating them with new movement and acting values.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of Nora Kaye, who joined the New York City Ballet shortly before the season commenced. In such ballets as *Symphony in C* her inner rhythm seems oddly at variance with the rest of the principals. Her *pirouettes*, *port de bras* and *échappés* are tolerable but she appears to have difficulty in her stretches. Nora Kaye can, of course, outdance almost any ballerina in a dramatic role but a purely classical ballet is still not her forte, at least this season. One can only hope that in seasons to come Miss Kaye will be able to assimilate the style of her co-dancers or, better still, that new works will be composed to fit her individual and truly magnificent talents.

André Eglevsky, who was a guest star during the season, principally confined his efforts to partnering Maria Tallchief in the *Sylvia: pas de deux* and to dancing with Miss Tallchief and Miss Kaye in Balanchine's virtuoso *Pas de Trois* which, fortunately, was costumed in much better taste than was the case in the recent de Cuevas repertoire. Eglevsky provided added strength to the male classical wing of the company and his bearing and deportment were



Photograph by Walter E. Owen

DIANA ADAMS AND HUGH LAING IN
'THE LADY OF THE CAMELLIAS'

a considerable improvement on his appearance with the Grand Ballet which proves once more the results that develop in a truly disciplined company.

Artistically and financially the recent season has been the most successful in the short but distinguished history of the New York City Ballet. There is now talk of a Chicago engagement, a probable early summer season in New York and a possible South American tour. These are all logical and to be expected for the New York City Ballet has proved to be the most vital dance company in America.

DANCE CURRENT AND TO COME

While awaiting the return of Ballet Theatre to the Met on April 9th, dance enthusiasts are finding a varied fare of dance activity in other fields. Melissa Hayden and André Eglevsky have been doing the *Black Swan pas de deux* (five times a day) in the stage shows at the Roxy Theatre while Josephine Baker has been having a personal triumph at the Strand Theatre in her first New York appearance for fifteen years.

Beginning on April 9th, Ballet Theatre premières what promises to be one of its most exciting seasons. Jean Babilée and his dancer-wife Nathalie Philippart will make their American debut with the company in Petit's *Le Jeune Homme et La Mort* and Babilée's *L'Amour et Son Amour* while Colette Marchand

will be appearing in Petit's *Les Demoiselles de La Nuit*. Then there is *Concerto*, by William Dollar, Herbert Ross's *The Thief Who Loved a Ghost* and *Circo de Espana* by Carmelita Maracci. *Ensayo Sinfonico* by Alicia Alonso and a new *Pas de Deux* by Enrique Martine for Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch round out the premières while Jean Babilée's celebrated *Blue Bird* variation leads the list of the novelties. A report on the first half of the season and four of the premières will appear in the next issue.

Beth Dean

Beth Dean has made a study of the native dances of the Red Indian, Maori and Aborigine of Australia. She presented a number of these during her week at the Mercury Theatre commencing March 26th, of which by far the most interesting were the enchanting group of Maori dances. The Aboriginal dances were doubtless authentic, but were obviously intended to be danced, not by one woman, but by large groups of men, so that one's imagination was too greatly taxed.

Victor Carell sang a group of charming Aboriginal songs, but I could see no possible connection between the Ethnic purport of this programme and the piano solos and old Italian arias which made up the rest of it.

P.W.M.

Ballet Rambert

Here are details of the current tour:—

May 14th: Arts Theatre, Doncaster.

May 21st: Theatre Royal, Bath.

David Paltenghi's ballet, *Fate's Revenge*, which was specially created for the Bath Festival, will have its world première during this week.

From May 28th Ballet Rambert are touring in Scotland, details of which will be given in the next issue.

The Association of Ballet Clubs

The above Association issues a most interesting Bulletin giving details of all the Ballet Clubs and their current activities. The Secretary of the Association, Miss Christine Greenfield, 20 Dean Road, London, N.W.2, will always be pleased to give particulars of the nearest Club to anyone anxious to join. Miss Greenfield is also the Secretary of the Willesden Ballet Circle, a most enterprising organisation with a stimulating programme of lectures, demonstrations, etc.

TELEVISION SURVEY

By LISA GORDON SMITH

ADULT television audiences have again been somewhat ballet-starved during the period of which I am writing, but the quality has been of interest even though the quantity has been small.

And, by the way, before discussing the three programmes we have had, I must apologise for an error I made in the February-March issue when I inferred that, in a production of *The Sleeping Beauty* for the children in December, Domini Callaghan danced Princess Aurora. That is what comes of making notes in the dark, with both eyes glued to the television screen! Aurora was, of course, danced by Svetlana Beriosova of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. My sincere apologies to her, and also to Domini Callaghan who danced the Lilac Fairy.

* * *

Ram Gopal followed West End and Hammersmith theatre seasons with a short television appearance with members of his company on February 18th. Production was by Christian Simpson and Miss Kay Ambrose spoke the introduction from some invisible fastness beyond the range of the cameras.

In such a short programme, only "potted" versions of a few dances were possible and I was left, at the end, even more breathless than when, a few days previously, I had sat in Ram Gopal's Kensington flat admiring his collection of Indian art and sculpture and hearing the "cuts" being planned.

Kumudini looks nearly as lovely on the screen as she does in "real life" and she danced as beautifully as ever. Strange to realise that this twenty-year-old leading dancer had no thought of taking up this career until her parents introduced Ram Gopal to her and he asked her to join his company! She had, of course, learned dancing as part of her education.

In this production of Chris Simpson's, one of the high-spots was the *Stick Dance*, in honour of the Elephant God, which he produced with his usual attention to the screen pattern and without losing any of the quality of the dance.

The second edition of the *Ballet for Beginners* series came to an end on March 5th with a programme subtitled "Ballet Workshop". No connection with our friends at the Mercury—just a re-use of the title used in the first series!

This, after a "re-cap" of the five previous programmes, dealt with the making of a ballet. All aspects of this composite and complex art were dealt with by Felicity Gray—with speciality talks by

Hugh Stevenson on decor and Anthony Hopkins on music. The television ballet group brought the programme to a cheerful conclusion with a performance of Anthony Tudor's *Soirée Musicale*.

* * *

On March 16th, Philip Bate produced *The Fair Queen of Wu*, a Chinese masque with choreography by Felicity Gray.

This was an interesting experiment and a highly successful one, for it was tastefully considered and did not, as such performances sometimes do, seem overlong.

Sonya Hana looked the name part to perfection, and Tutte Lemkow, Donald Reed and Michel de Lutry danced and mimed excellently. Domini Callaghan as the Queen Mother of Wu, showed her versatility in a type of role which was new to her.

(Cont. at foot of col. 1 next page)

DOMINI CALLAGHAN AND MICHEL DE LUTRY WHO
RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THEIR ENGAGEMENT



GERMANY SCORES "ON POINTS"

By J. STUART BARKER

GRADUALLY, Germany is emerging from the artistic stagnation forced upon her by the Nazi regime, and the most recent example of her attempt to catch up with the rest of the Western world is the emergence in two widely separated areas, of ballet in the classical tradition, as opposed to the expressionist form of dance usually associated with Central Europe.

In November, Munich saw the first performances of the ballet company of the Bavarian State Opera since its reorganisation by Victor Gsovsky. Headed by Gsovsky's protégée, Irène Skorik, who scored an enormous personal success, the short version of *Swan Lake* was presented, along with two new works. The first, by Tatjana Gsovsky (wife of the 'maestro' and directress of the Berlin State Opera Ballet) was based on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, to music by Boris Blacher. Skorik appeared as Ophelia, with Franz Baur and Heino Halluber as Hamlet and Laertes, and her lyrical dancing was highly praised, as was the duel scene for the men. The composer has included an invisible chorus, and the musical interpretation of Ophelia's drowning, as her body lies stretched across the bare stage, was particularly effective.

The second new work, a *ballet bouffe* by Victor Gsovsky, was danced to music by Jacques Offenbach against a Montmartre setting by Helmut Jürgens. In it mininettes, painters, apaches and policemen perform the usual quadrilles, can-cans and waltzes so appropriate to the "*bonbonnière*" atmosphere of the Prince Regent Theatre.

Meanwhile, far away to the North in the *fin de siècle* Kurhaus of Bad Segeberg, an even greater venture was coming into being—the "Ballett-Theatre-Compagnie". Financed by Werner G. Lang, a Hamburg businessman, impresario M. A. Pflugmacher-Lorit had gathered together Helge Pawlinin, choreographer of *Goyescas* and *The Student of Prague* (with Harald Kreutzberg), Werner Egk, Germany's leading modern composer and a group of young dancers from

who had found inspiration in visiting ballet companies from France, England and America. The fruit of their labours was revealed to the public of Hamburg during the first days of the year, when they performed *Abraxas* with unprecedented success, before embarking on a European tour.

Egk's *Faust-Ballet* had already been staged in Munich with Choreography by Janine Charrat, but this version (recently acquired by the Marquis de Cuevas for his Company) was banned by the Munich authorities for reasons known only to themselves, though it is performed with great success in Berlin.

To avoid any further scandal, this new version by Pawlinin was commissioned, and only one of the original participants was retained—Marcel Luipart, ex-member of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carle, in the role of Faust. He has now been joined by Natascha Trofimova, prima ballerina of the Berlin State Opera and pupil of Eugenie Eduardowa, to dance Bellastriga, the female counterpart of Mephistopheles, and Edel von Rothe, likewise from Berlin and a pupil of Tatjana Gsovsky, to dance Archisposa, Faust's ideal of womanhood. Gisela Deege as Margarete, Elizabeth Majon as the Serpent, Karl Heinz King as the Tiger, Fredy Kaindl as Marbuel the child devil, and Oleg Louigine as Satan, head the ensemble directed by Heino Heiden, also a pupil of Tatjana Gsovsky and soloist at the Berlin State Opera. Decor is by Janni Loghi, a Greek from the Munich State Opera, and costumes by Margot Utvar, a Viennese girl from Paris. Both are simple and show a good sense of colour. The ballet is in five scenes and provides a complete evening's entertainment—an ambitious project for a new company.

In Scene 1, Faust conjures up Bellastriga, the beautiful she devil, accompanied by the serpent and the tiger. She persuades him to conclude a pact with the devil by showing him a vision of Archisposa, the devil's paramour. Faust regains his youth and sets out on his travels, shadowed by Bellastriga.

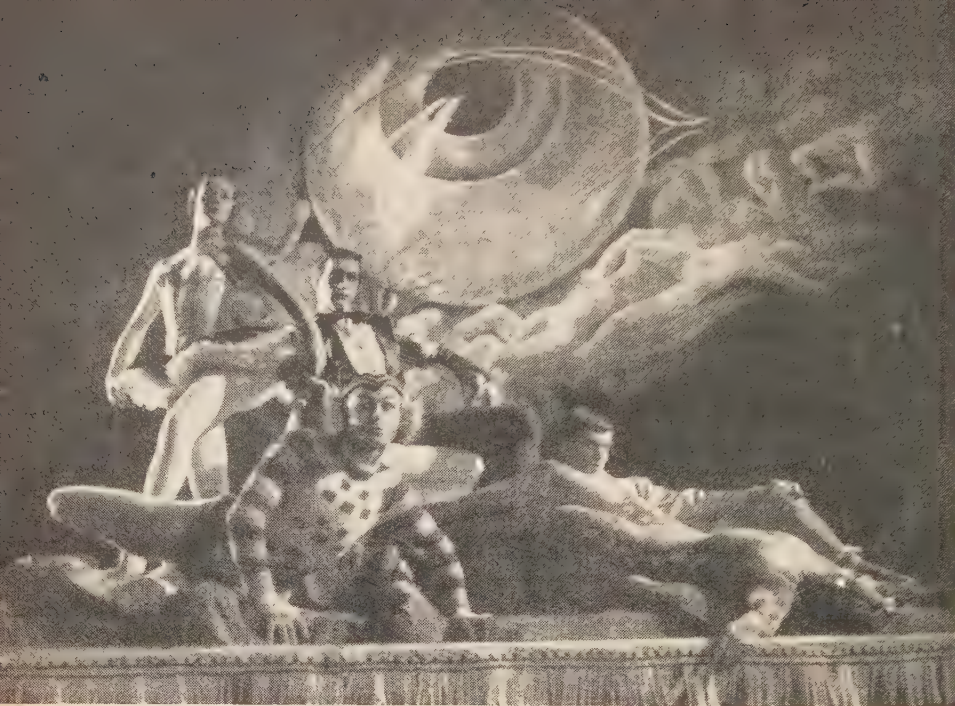
Scene 2 finds them at the court of the King of Spain, where Faust discovers Archisposa in the guise of the Queen. In a mirror he conjures up apparitions of Hector fighting Achilles, Jupiter bearing away Europa, and finally himself dancing with the Queen. While the courtiers stand amazed, he seizes the Queen and carries her off.

This third apparition presents the interesting choreographic idea of a double *pas de deux* reminiscent of Ashton's Echo Dance in *The Faery Queen*,

(Continued from previous page)

Philip Bate demonstrated, once again, that he can produce beautiful screen pictures without sacrificing the choreographer's intention, though a freer use of close-ups would have made it easier to establish the characters, an all-important factor, for so mobile an art within so small a frame.

theatres throughout the Western Zones, and Berlin,



NATASCHA TROFIMOV
AS BELLASTRIGA, OLE
LONIGINE AS SATAN,
KARL HEINZ KING AS
THE TIGER, FREDI
KAINDL AS MARBUCH
AND ELIZABETH MAJOR
AS THE SERPENT I
'ABRAXAS'

Photograph by
courtesy of Deutsch
Presse-Agentur

but at the moment its difficulties are too great for its exponents—it has many beautiful movements nevertheless.

The third scene reveals Faust with Archisposa in Hell, but Satan reclaims his paramour and Faust flees in horror. This scene somehow reminded me of *Miracle in the Gorbals*, especially the top-hats and tails and split skirts and feather boas of the damned.

In Scene 4 Faust is discovered in the Elysian Fields, where he has found peace with Helen (who is attended by a set of *Symphonic Variations* in red and white). Archisposa appears and his dream-world falls to dust.

The final scene is the mediaeval festival where Faust meets the pure and lovely Margarete. Alarmed, Bellastriga summons Archisposa and her train but Faust continues to pursue Margarete. In desperation she presents him with the pact which he tears up, thus bringing destruction not only upon himself but upon Margarete also.

Luipart danced well as Faust but one wished he were a little younger and less "chunky", though admittedly his costume and make-up did little to help him, a failing common amongst older male dancers today. Trofimova is a strong dancer reminiscent of Pamela May in *Black Queen* mood, and her costume recalled that of La Mort Amoureuse in *Don Juan* (though as this has not been seen in Germany I am possibly reading too much between the lines).

The most impressive performance, however, came from auburn-haired Edel von Rothe, whose move-

ments flow serenely and who alone possesses the "grand manner". Gisela Deege, a pale blonde, danced well, but is a trifle tall for her present partner. As the serpent, Elisabeth Majon writhed acrobatically around Karl Heinz King, who leaped athletically as the tiger (could someone have been thinking of Danielle Darmanee and Teddy Rodolphe?) while the corps showed great enthusiasm and energy which was refreshing if at times misguided. The whole company's tendency to 'prance' inevitably suggests a paddock full of racehorses, but there is a high proportion of thoroughbreds amongst them and when they learn not to exceed their capabilities they should go far. The men tend on the whole to be rather tall and the girls to be somewhat jerky in their movements, but they are not the tough Teutons one might have expected and are to be congratulated on a most auspicious debut. Werner Egk has provided a very danceable score and shows a real understanding of ballet (his *Joan of Zarissa* is soon to be performed in South America). He also possesses a keen sense of dramatic development (already evident in his operas *Peer Gynt* and *Columbus* where the Hall of the Mountain King in the former is strongly reminiscent of Pandemonium in this ballet) and his personal co-operation, even to conducting several performances must have contributed in no small measure to the success of this youthful and, above all, homogenous company, whose future development should be worthy of careful attention.

News from Paris

A SPECIAL Gala, organised by the Association of Writers and Critics of the Dance and held at the Palais de Chaillot on March 19th brought together for this unique occasion about twenty stars of the dance, including Janine Charrat, Lycette Darsenval, Rosella Hightower, Ethery Pagava, Marjorie Tallchief, Michel Renault, George Skibine, Vladimir Skouratoff, etc. During this Gala which was, without doubt, the most interesting event of the season so far, Janine Charrat presented a new ballet to the Grieg Piano Concerto, dancing in it herself with Serge Perrault who, it is said, has now left the Roland Petit company. This work proves conclusively the originality and beautiful lyricism of Janine Charrat for whose talent we may have the highest hopes.

* * *

The month of March also saw the debut at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées of the company headed by Pilar Lopez, sister of the celebrated Spanish dancer, the late Argentinita. The production is absolutely meticulous, if cold at times. The young men are magnificent, particularly Roberto Ximenes, Manolo Vargas and Alejandro Vegas who are brilliant in all phases of the Spanish dance from the classic bolero of the late 18th century to the modern creations. Lacking the lithe sinuousness of her sister (she is even a little on the heavy side) Pilar Lopez is light of foot and shows herself as a great artist. The great success of the programme is *The Cobbler's Wife and the Stranger* with music by J. G. Leoz, choreography by Pilar Lopez and decor by Ferdinando Rivero. Care and taste are evident throughout the presentation of all the ballets. Founded in New York in 1940 by Incarnacion Lopez (Argentinita) these ballets have lived because of the spirit and art of their creator who passed too soon from the stages of the world, but whose work is being carried on by Pilar Lopez.

* * *

So far this year Paris has had a very poor season of the dance. There is no news of any visiting foreign company. The resurrection of the Ballets des Champs-Élysées is spoken of, but only as a rumour. On the other hand, dance plays a very important part in the new revue at the Casino de Paris. The ballets are in the hands of Jean Guelis whose small company is made up of dancers from the Ballets des Champs-Élysées, Ballet de Monte-Carlo and other groups. Maurice Thiriet, Henri Sauguet and J. M. Damase



Photograph by courtesy of Deutsche Presse-Agentur

EDEL VON ROTHE AS ARCHIPOSA IN 'ABRAXAS'

have written special scores for these ballets. It is said that Monsieur Varna, director of the Casino, intends to form a small company which would be known as Le Ballet du Casino de Paris.

The Florence Festival in May has engaged Yvette Chauviré, Jean Babilée, Vladimir Skouratoff and Jacqueline Moreau (this last on leave at the moment from the Paris Opera). It is probable that some of the ballets will first be presented in Paris.

FERDINAND REYNA.

Ballet Vocabulary (3)

Compiled by LEO KERSLEY & JANET SINCLAIR

BALANCE

A *balancé* is a rocking step in waltz rhythm.

The dancer stands on his right leg with the ball of the left foot lightly touching the ground behind. First he steps out to the side on to the left foot, bringing the right behind it with the ball of the foot on the floor. Secondly the dancer takes the weight for a moment on to the right leg, which does not change position. Finally he transfers the weight firmly back to the left foot, and is ready to reverse the step if required. The *balancé* above described is a *balancé derrière*, and it can also be performed *dévant* when the bent leg remains in front of the other.

Balancé can also be done *en avant* or *en arrière*, when the movement sways backwards and forwards instead of from side to side, as the foot is first taken to front or back instead of to the side.

Paris begins his solo in *Helen of Troy* with two *balancés derrière*; and in the finale of *Les Sylphides* when the man rejoins his partner after his short solo they do a *balancé en avant* and *en arrière* facing each other before the girl is lifted, then two more *balancés* back to back, and a lift, before repeating the first sequence.

BASQUE, PAS DE

The *pas de basque* is a step in three movements, somewhat reminiscent of the basic waltz step (forward, side, together) in ballroom dancing.

The dancer begins with both feet together: first, she sweeps the front foot forward and out to the side; secondly, she springs on to it and slides the other foot past it to the front, when the foot on to which she sprang (now at the back) stretches and thirdly closes at the back. The step can also be done backwards (*en arrière*).

If the step glides and the spring is slight, the *pas de basque* is 'glissé'; if the first movement is done with a high jump and sweep, it is 'sauté'.

Giselle opens the first dance she performs with the *corps de ballet* on the stage with three *ballonnés* (see last issue) with the leg extending forwards, and a *pas de basque sauté*, which sequence she repeats three times on alternating feet. Later she does it with Albrecht.

BASQUE, GRAND PAS DE

The dancer stands with her feet together: she throws the front leg forward and springs, immediately throwing the supporting leg forward as well, so that

it rises as the other descends, and then closes in front. The legs may be thrown high in this step, or low when it is described as a *petit grand pas de basque*.

Either may end with the legs crossed, so that the dancer can swivel round on the toes, when the words '*en tournant*' are added to the name of the step.

When the Sugar Plum Fairy in her solo travels forward diagonally from the audience's left, she performs a *grand pas de basque*, two steps, another *grand pas de basque*, and a series of little *pas de bourrée* on the spot before repeating the whole sequence. At the end of the solo in the Black Swan *pas de deux*, Odile performs a series of *petit grand pas de basque* turning, while travelling round the stage. (Progressing round the stage in a circle is known as '*en manège*').

BASQUE, SAUT DE

N.B.—For purposes of description this step is given travelling to the right, but it is of course also performed travelling to the left.

The dancer steps on his right foot to the front right hand corner of the stage, bending both knees. He then throws the left leg before him to the corner, and jumps in that direction into a vertical position with the right foot drawn up to the left knee. At the same time describing a turn to the right in the air, landing to face the front in that position. He is then ready to repeat the step in the same direction if necessary.

This step may be performed with a large or a small jump.

In the coda of the *Giselle* "*Peasant*" *pas de deux*, when the man enters, both dancers perform two big *sauts de basque* crossing the stage in opposite directions, then a step forward, a little *cabriole* in front and a *jeté* forward, before repeating this sequence in the reverse direction.

Aurora's circle round the stage just before the end of her solo in the Vision Scene of *The Sleeping Beauty* consists of *sauts de basque*, with the arms held alternately down and above the head, which latter position is usual for high *sauts de basque* as it helps the jump.

Because of its extreme difficulty, a *saut de basque* turning twice in the air is rarely used.

BATTEMENTS

There are many useful exercises done at the bar termed *battements*, but only those seen on the stage will be described here, without mentioning their utilitarian purposes.

In a *grand battement* one leg swings straight up to hip level.

When one leg slides out as far as it will go without leaving the floor, the dancer is performing a *battement tendu*.

To perform a *battement retiré* or *raccourci* one foot is drawn up to the knee. (For convenience, this is known as a *retiré*.)

When one foot is drawn up to the knee or ankle and then extended, the dancer is performing a *battement développé* (called briefly a *développé*).

The four movements above are described *en dehors*, or going outwards: when the leg is returned to the supporting foot, in the same way, the movements are *en dedans* or inwards.

When the knee is slightly bent and the raised foot beats alternately against the front and back of the supporting ankle, the dancer is performing *petits battements sur le cou de pied*, and if the beats are made only on the front or on the back of the ankle the movement is a *petit battement sur le cou de pied serré*.

The dancer performs a *battement en cloche* when one leg swings alternately to the front and back past the supporting heel.

Aurora begins her solo in the Vision Scene of *The Sleeping Beauty* with a series of *grands battements en dehors* rising on to the toe followed by *battements développés en dedans* as she comes down, repeated sixteen times on alternate legs, coming forward from the centre back stage.

Almost invariably before pirouetting away from the supporting leg, the male dancer will do a *battement tendu* to the side before sinking into the preparatory position.

The dancer begins the third solo in the *Swan Lake pas de trois* with seven *battements retirés* on alternate feet turning, then a little *pas de bourrée couru* before extending the leg in a *battement tendu* to the corner, which is repeated four times on alternate legs. This entire sequence is performed three times travelling forward, then the *battements retirés* are repeated once more before she runs to the corner.

To conclude the *pas de deux* in Act II of *Swan Lake*, Siegfried walks round holding Odette's right hand above her head and left hand at the side, while she does *petit battements sur le cou de pied serré*. She then performs a *battement développé* to the front *en dehors* as a preparation for the finger turns. The whole sequence is repeated three times before she falls into Benno's arms.

John Kriza begins his solo in *Fancy Free* with a *battement en cloche*; the Lady Belerma performs many little *battements en cloche* on tiptoe in the Cavern Scene of de Valois' *Don Quixote*.

(To be continued)

International Ballet

The following is the itinerary for the next few weeks:—

May 7th: New Theatre, Oxford.

May 14th for two weeks: Opera House, Manchester.

May 28th: New Theatre, Hull.

Massine's ballet *Capriccio Espagnol* was given for the first time by this company during their two-week season at Coventry at the end of April.

Leeds Ballet Club

This club, which only came into being last November, already has a membership of over 150. It is affiliated to the Leeds Civic Arts Guild (43 Cookridge Street, Leeds), and has full use of rehearsal rooms, Civic Theatre, private club playhouse, etc. Annual subscription is 5/- plus 1/- affiliation fee. Ballet lovers in the district who are interested should write for full details to the Hon. Membership Secretary, Mr. D. M. Timms, 11 Melbourne Street, Leeds, 2.

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